

Message Text

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PAGE 01 CARACA 01106 022058Z
ACTION ARA-06

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 NSC-05 NSCE-00 PM-03 SP-02 L-01
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C O N F I D E N T I A L CARACAS 1106

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, CU, VE
SUBJECT: PRESIDENT PEREZ OFFERS TO "HELP" ON CUBAN
RELATIONS QUESTION

1. PRESIDENT PEREZ SUMMONED ME TO HIS OFFICE THIS MORNING TO COVER A NUMBER OF POINTS. ONE OF THE POINTS HE WANTED TO COVER WAS THE QUESTION OF US RELATIONS WITH CUBA. PEREZ SAID HE HAD READ THE SECRETARY'S PUBLIC COMMENTS ON THIS SUBJECT WITH GREAT INTEREST, AND THOUGHT THAT THAT WAS THE RIGHT APPROACH. HE SAID IT WOULD BE A GOOD TIME TO REINSTATE THE AIR PIRACY AGREEMENT; THIS WOULD BE EVIDENCE OF GOOD WILL THAT MIGHT OPEN UP INTERESTING PROSPECTS.

2. I SAID THAT THE SECRETARY HAD SIMPLY ANSWERED A QUESTION, AND I FRANKLY DID NOT KNOW THAT ANYTHING MORE LAY BEHIND THOSE REMARKS. IN ANY CASE, AS THE SECRETARY SAID, THE KEY TO THE QUESTION OF WHAT HAPPENS TO CUBAN-US RELATIONS IS CASTRO'S ATTITUDE. IF CASTRO WERE TO TAKE THE INITIATIVE TO RESTORE THE HIJACKING AGREEMENT THAT WOULD INDEED BE INTERESTING, BUT A GREAT DEAL DEPENDS ON CASTRO'S ATTITUDE AND AIMS.

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3. PEREZ SAID THAT HE COULD SPEAK TO CASTRO, AND IF HE COULD BE OF ANY ASSISTANCE TO US AS A CHANNEL OR INTERLOCUTOR HE WOULD BE PREPARED TO HELP. I SAID THAT I DID NOT KNOW WHAT THE USG WAS PREPARED TO DO AT THIS POINT OR WHAT CONSIDERATIONS THE SECRETARY MAY HAVE IN MIND. I SAID THAT WHAT I WOULD LIKE TO

DO IS REPORT OUR CONVERSATION AND SEE WHAT GUIDANCE
THE DEPARTMENT MIGHT WISH TO GIVE, AND I SUGGESTED
WE AWAIT WASHINGTON'S REACTION. HE QUICKLY AGREED.

4. COMMENT. PEREZ CAN IN FACT BE VERY HELPFUL IF
WE WANT HIM TO BE. HIS OFT-REPEATED CLAIM THAT HE
HAS MORE INFLUENCE WITH CASTRO THAN ANY OTHER LATIN
AMERICAN CHIEF OF STATE IS PROBABLY CORRECT. WHAT
KIND OF RESPONSE DOES THE DEPARTMENT WISH ME TO MAKE?
VAKY

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NNN

Message Attributes

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